

Mr. Speaker, Byron has been active in local and regional government since he came to Palo Alto in 1957, and since then, he has repeatedly shown his commitment to the community through dedicated public service. He was a member of the Palo Alto City Council for 9 years and served two terms as mayor. In addition, for many years, Byron has been an active participant in local, State, and national environmental boards.

As a member of the California State Legislature, Byron has many notable achievements, however I wish to take a moment to mention some of the numerous legislative successes that Senator Sher has accomplished in the area of environmental protection. He is the author of landmark laws to protect California's environment, including the California Clean Air Act, the Integrated Waste Management Act, the Surface Mining Reclamation Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act and the nation's first law to prevent toxic contamination from leaking underground storage tanks. He also authored laws to strengthen California's timber regulations and added new rivers to California's Wild and Scenic River System, safeguarding them for future generations. He is consistently rated among the top legislators by the most respected environmental, consumer, law enforcement, education and housing groups. I applaud his conscientious hard work on the part of our community and California.

It is always a privilege to pay tribute to an extraordinary public servant on his retirement from a long and illustrious career of public service. What makes Byron so special though, is that this is his second such retirement from public service. After eight terms in the California Assembly he was term limited out of office. In 1996, however, he found a way to continue his service to the people of California, winning a special election to fill a vacancy in the State Senate. Now having exhausted almost every public office available, we on the Peninsula wait with excitement to learn how Byron will use his exceptional talents to continue to give back to our community and the nation at large.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Byron Sher as he completes a record of distinguished service in the California State legislature. The people of San Mateo County and the people of California have been well served by his extraordinary leadership and advocacy in both the State Assembly and the State Senate. I extend my personal best wishes to Byron and his family for a relaxing and well-deserved retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 2004

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote 6, H.R. 1385, to extend the provision of title 39, United States Code, under which the United States Postal Service is authorized to issue a special postage stamp to benefit breast cancer research and during rollcall vote 7, H.R. 3493, Medical Devices Technical Corrections Act, I was unavoidably detained due to inclement weather. If I had been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 6 and 7.

MOURNING THE DEATH OF JOHN J. SEXTON

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. Early this morning, the people of Chicago lost a great friend in John J. Sexton who passed away after a long and difficult illness. John Sexton was a man who lived life to its fullest, and the friends and family he had are a testament to the quality of his character and the type of man he was.

John Sexton achieved his success in life through hard work and determination. He spent his life in public service and was dedicated to the people of Chicago, rising through the ranks with the City, from machinist, to foreman, to Assistant Superintendent of the Meter Division of the City's Water Department, and finally Superintendent of the Meter Division. His dedication to his job and the city he loved is an example of why Chicago is known as "The City That Works."

But, it was John's connection to and involvement in his community that John's friends will remember. John loved the northwest side of Chicago, his home for his entire life. John raised his family in the Hiawatha Park neighborhood where he was very active as president of the Hiawatha Boys Baseball Organization.

As church life plays such an important role in the lives of so many Chicagoans, John was a member of several esteemed Northwest side parishes. He grew up in Presentation Parish, attended grammar school at St. Angela's and high school at St. Michael's. As an adult he was a member of St. Francis Borgia Parish.

The Northwest side has produced some of Chicago's finest leaders, and John Sexton played an active part in the success of many of their careers. John's passion for politics began at 16, working as a precinct worker for former Alderman Thomas Casey. As a precinct captain in the mighty 36th Ward Regular Democratic Organization, John became a close confidant and friend to many elected officials, especially Alderman William J.P. Banks and State Senator James A. DeLeo.

John's top priority was always his family, and the love and support they provided him was the most important thing in his life. For 31 years he was married to his wonderful wife, Rosetta. Their family also includes their daughter, Laurie Moran, and her husband Joseph, their son, John Jr., their daughter, Diana, and John's sister, Mary Kay Kuhter.

Mr. Speaker, I join with the people of Chicago in mourning John Sexton, a man I was proud to call a friend. May God bless the Sexton family and the memory of a man who was truly loved by his friends, his community and his family.

HONORING THE LEBANON-WILSON COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 2004

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 80th anniversary of the Leb-

anon-Wilson County Chamber of Commerce, an organization that has helped that Middle Tennessee community be one of the most desirable places in America to live.

The chamber can take a lot of credit for the quality of life enjoyed in Wilson County. Residents have an opportunity to work at good jobs, send their children to quality schools and experience a wide variety of recreational venues, including a new \$125 million super-speedway that draws racing fans from all over the country. The chamber's advocacy for the business community and its economic development efforts have definitely paid big dividends to the county.

Chartered in September 1924, the Chamber of Commerce is fortunate to have had so many active, visionary members in its ranks. They have been instrumental in helping strengthen the county's diverse economy, including the retail, distribution and industrial base. Chamber leaders have helped attract many top-notch companies to the area. Dell computers, for example, employs approximately 1,400 people at its Wilson County assembly facility.

The Lebanon-Wilson County Chamber of Commerce has become one of the premier community advocates in the nation and has helped boost the area's quality of life in so many ways. As the chamber celebrates its 80 years of existence, I commend the organization for all it has done to make Wilson County such a desirable place to live and raise a family.

UNEMPLOYMENT EXTENSION

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 2004

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give voice to millions of unemployed American workers. The citizens I speak of are the very people who keep the United States of America open for business each day. However as we are gathered here today, these people are, desperately searching for work so that they may provide food for their families, keep a roof over their heads, and save money to send their children to college and one day enjoy a well-deserved retirement. In December we failed to aid these people by not extending the benefits provided under Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) for millions of unemployed citizens, we now have the chance to succeed where we failed before.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of these Americans, who are our constituents, our neighbors, and the people who have entrusted us with the care of our nation, it is essential that we renew their unemployment benefits, and it is essential that we do it now. At the close of last year we failed to renew these benefits under TEUC for as many as 450,000 unemployed workers and instead of families spending quality time with each other, exchanging gifts, and rejoicing in the new year, the bottoms of Christmas trees were left bare and the countdown to the New Year was a time for fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters to hope 2004 might be better. Middle class Americans cannot sustain the American dream while not receiving any income for three or four months, or even longer. We owe them this